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Walking Song

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Stan couldn't let go of the trigger till the bandoleer was spent. God, please . . . let him hurry and die . . . the mouth opening and closing in futility. . . . Why does he stay propped up against the wall like that? Why do those empty eyes not close?

Stan couldn't move. His body was rigid with horror at the proximity of the dying being. The ants wouldn't go away. . . . The explosion to the east . . . the machine gun was silent, and John must be running now. . . .

He pushed away from the wall; bits of sand and rock that had been lodged behind his back peppered to the floor. He moved cautiously till he reached the middle of the stairs; the dead man slumped forward and tumbled sideways down the steps as Stan fled. In the clearing now, it was as if a great hand was partly pushing and partly carrying him from the structure. The feverish stinging ants were still there.

Walking Song

by K. P. Kaiser

Architecture, Jr.

I need the song of summer
to echo my muffled footsteps
in the snow, and wet-green
newborn smells to mingle with
the multi-colored odors
in the burning of fall.
And I need the magic
of blue-ice cathedrals
to fan cotton-candy clouds
in brown-eyed summer,
and pumpkin and golden cider
to wash with rain
the muddy shoes of spring.